

**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

1. A method in a data processing system for indicating most recent messages in a related thread of messages in a message file, the method comprising:

responsive to a first user input selecting a message for processing, determining whether a more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file; and

presenting a first indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

responsive to a second user input to send the message, determining whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file; and

presenting a second indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein each message in the message file includes a set of globally unique identifiers and wherein the step of determining whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file includes using globally

unique identifiers to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of determining whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file includes heuristically analyzing header information in each document present in the message file to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising: responsive to presenting the first indication, providing a user an ability to select the more recent message in the thread of related messages for processing.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the message is an email message.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message for a reply.

8. The method of claim 5, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message to be forwarded.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein the first user input begins a workflow step and the second user input ends the workflow step.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the method is implemented in a client email application executing on the data processing system.

11. A data processing system for indicating most recent messages in a related thread of messages in a message file, the data processing system comprising:

    a bus system;  
    a communications unit connected to the bus system;  
    a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and  
    a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to determine whether a more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in a message file in response to a first user input selecting the message for processing; and present a first indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

12. The data processing system of claim 11, wherein the processing unit further executes the set of instructions to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file in response to a second user input to send the message; and present a second indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file.

13. A data processing system for indicating most recent messages in a related thread of messages in a message file, the data processing system comprising:

    determining means, responsive to a first user input selecting a message for processing, for determining whether a more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file; and

    presenting means for presenting a first indication of the more recent version if the more recent version of the document is present in the message file.

14. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the determining means is a first determining means and the presenting means is a first presenting means and further comprising:

    second determining means, responsive to a second user input to send the message, for determining whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file; and

    second presenting means for presenting a second indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file.

15. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein each message in the message file includes a set of globally unique identifiers and wherein the first determining means includes using means for using globally unique

identifiers to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

16. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the first determining means includes analyzing means for heuristically analyzing header information in each message present in the message file to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

17. The data processing system of claim 13 further comprising:

providing means, responsive to presenting the first indication, for providing a user an ability to select the more recent message in the thread of related messages for processing.

18. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the message is an email message.

19. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message for a reply.

20. The data processing system of claim 18, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message to be forwarded.

21. The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the first user input begins a workflow step and the second user input ends the workflow step.

22. The data processing system of claim 13, wherein the first determining means, the first presenting means, the second determining means, and the second presenting means are implemented in a client email application executing on the data processing system.

23. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for indicating most recent messages in a related thread of messages in a message file, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions, responsive to a first user input selecting a message for processing, for determining whether a more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file; and

second instructions for presenting a first indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.

24. The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising:

third instructions, responsive to a second user input to send the message, for determining whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file; and

fourth instructions for presenting a second indication of the more recent message if the more recent message in the thread of related messages has been received in the message file.

25. The computer program product of claim 24, wherein each message in the message file includes a set of globally unique identifiers and wherein the first instructions includes sub-instructions for using globally unique identifiers to determine whether the more recent message in the thread of related messages is present in the message file.
26. The computer program product of claim 24, wherein the first instructions includes sub-instructions for heuristically analyzing header information in each message present in the message file to determine whether the more recent version is present in the message file.
27. The computer program product of claim 23 further comprising:
  - third instructions, responsive to presenting the first indication, for providing a user an message in the thread of related messages version of the document for processing.
28. The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the message is an email message.

29. The computer program product of claim 28, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message for a reply.

30. The computer program product of claim 28, wherein the first user input is a selection of the email message to be forwarded.

31. The computer program product of claim 24, wherein the first user input begins a workflow step and the second user input ends the workflow step.

32. The computer program product of claim 23, wherein the computer program product is implemented in a client email application executing on the data processing system.